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A Fun *Quiz Yourself* Section Included!

Jim Thorpe

Jim Thorpe

Jim Thorpe

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Jim Thorpe

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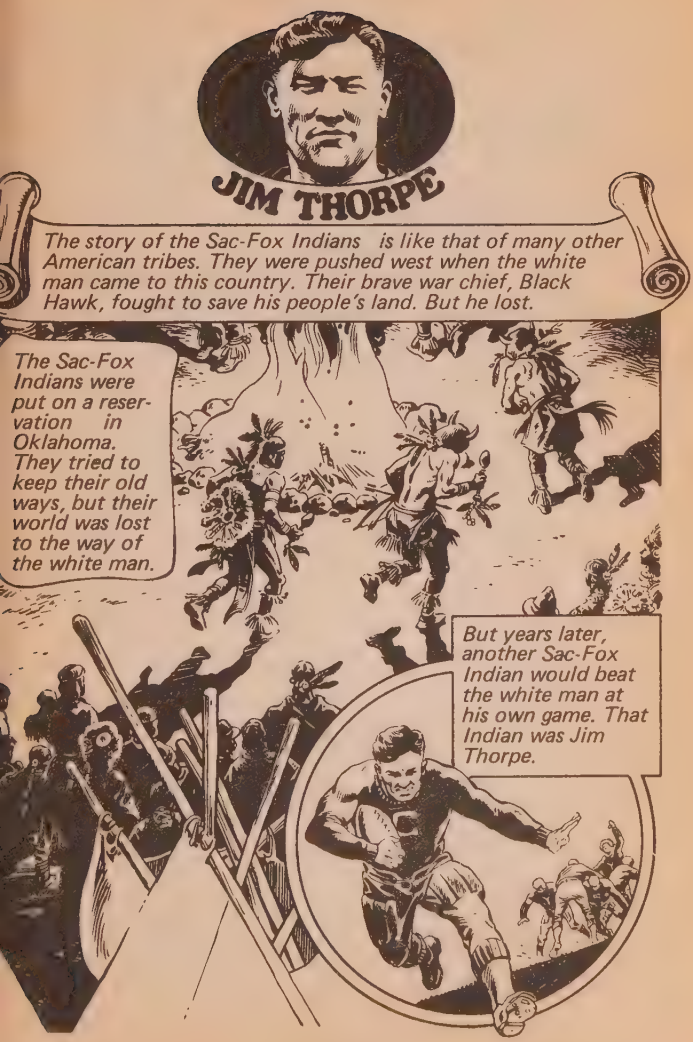
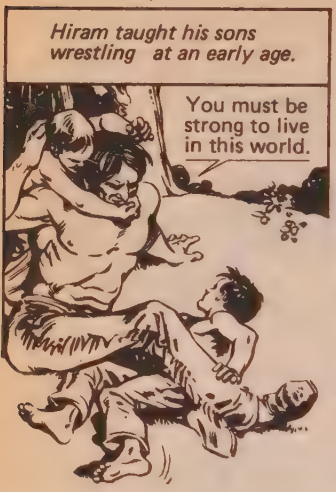
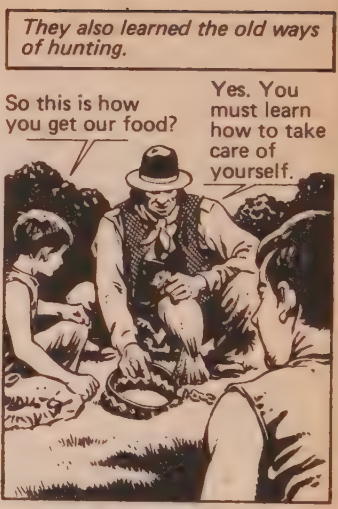
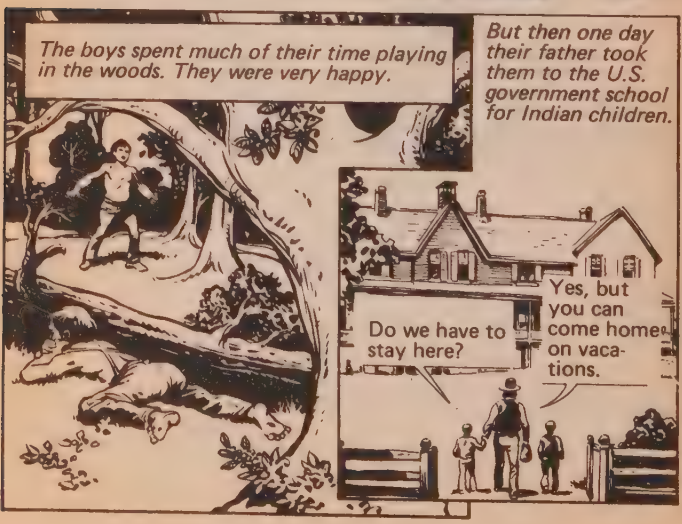

JIM THORPE
The story of the Sac-Fox Indians is like that of many other American tribes. They were pushed west when the white man came to this country. Their brave war chief, Black Hawk, fought to save his people's land. But he lost.
The Sac-Fox Indians were put on a reservation in Oklahoma. They tried to keep their old ways, but their world was lost to the way of the white man.
But years later, another Sac-Fox Indian would beat the white man at his own game. That Indian was Jim Thorpe.

Childhood and Early Schooling

Jim's father, Hiram Thorpe, was one of the first Sac-Fox Indians to change from the old ways.
This log cabin will be snug and warm.
But it is so different from our old home!
On May 27, 1887, Hiram's wife gave birth to twin sons.
I will call this one James Thorpe.
But he will also be called Bright Path.
The twins, James and Charlie, ran and played together.
Come on! Let's race to the river.
Nobody beats Jim!
They were a good match for each other.

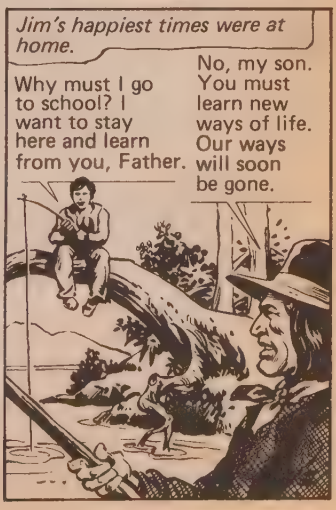

Hiram taught his sons wrestling at an early age.
You must be strong to live in this world.


They also learned the old ways of hunting.
So this is how you get our food?
Yes. You must learn how to take care of yourself.

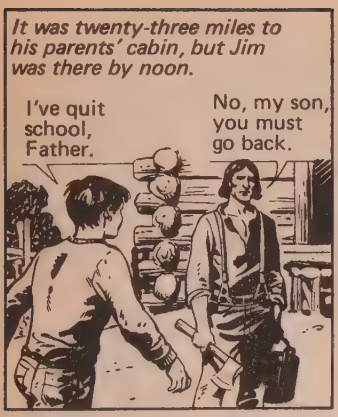

The boys spent much of their time playing in the woods. They were very happy.
But then one day their father took them to the U.S. government school for Indian children.
Do we have to stay here?
Yes, but you can come home on vacations.

From the beginning, young Jim loved sports.

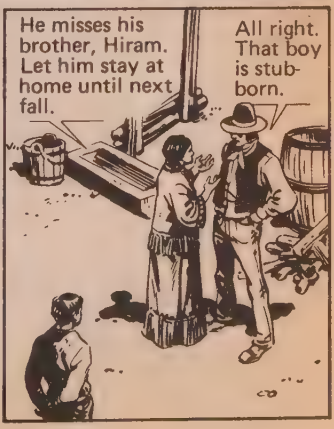
But he didn't like the classroom.
James! I wish you'd pay as much attention to your books as you do to killing flies.

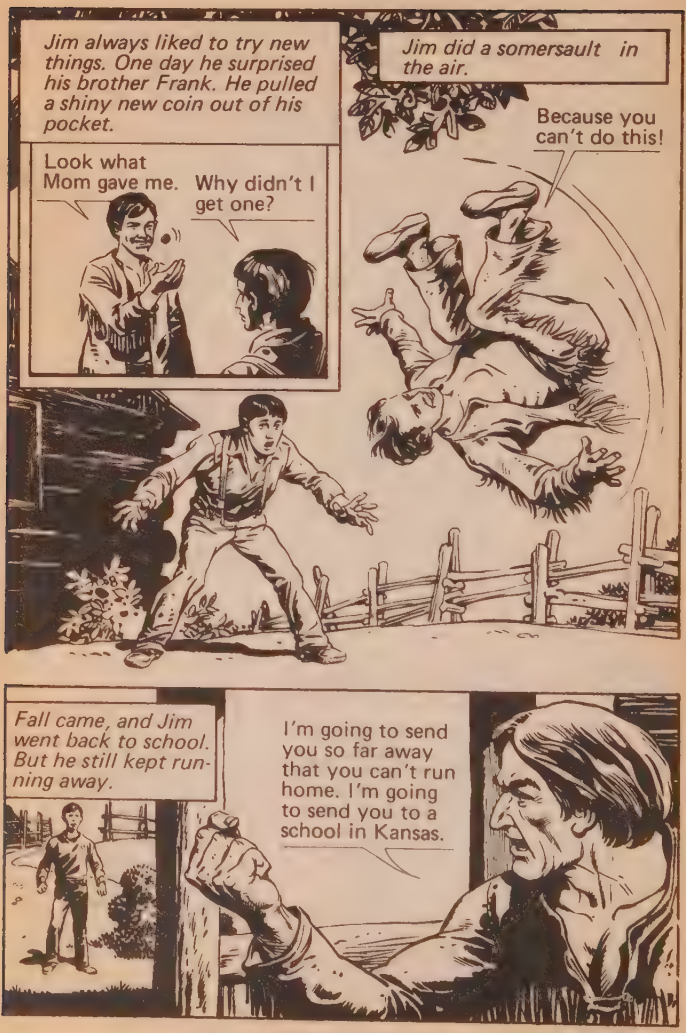

Jim's happiest times were at home.
Why must I go to school? I want to stay here and learn from you, Father.
No, my son. You must learn new ways of life. Our ways will soon be gone.

When the boys were nine, something very sad happened.
Your brother is very sick, Jim.
But you must be able to save him!
Charlie died in the winter of 1897.
After his brother died, Jim hated school even more.
One morning he awoke before dawn.
I know what to do. I'll run away.



But as soon as his father left, Jim was off again. This time he ran all the way home through the woods.




Jim always liked to try new things. One day he surprised his brother Frank. He pulled a shiny new coin out of his pocket.
Look what Mom gave me.
Why didn't I get one?
Jim did a somersault in the air.
Because you can't do this!
Fall came, and Jim went back to school. But he still kept running away.
I'm going to send you so far away that you can't run home. I'm going to send you to a school in Kansas.

Football, Baseball, and Track

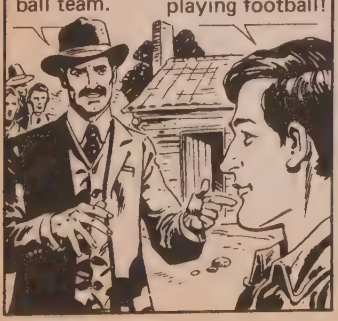
It was over 125 miles to Haskell, Kansas. Even by train it seemed a long way from home.
At Haskell Jim first played football.
Can I try to kick that ball?
Sure, kid.
Jim kicked the ball.
Wow! How old are you?
Eleven.
You could be a great football player when you grow up.
I know. I'm going to be a star!

But one day Jim got some bad news.
There's a letter in the office from your father. He's been hurt in a hunting accident.
The school would have sent him home by train. But Jim didn't wait.
Sometimes he had to swim across big rivers.
He stopped at farmhouses to beg for food.
You're just a child!
It took him almost two weeks to walk all the way home.

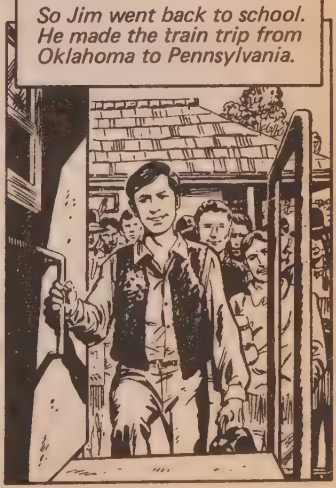
Just as Jim's father was getting better, his mother became very sick. Soon she died.

Jim stayed at home to help the family. To earn money, he and Frank learned to catch and break wild horses.

Then one day when Jim was fifteen, a teacher from the Carlisle Indian School in Pennsylvania came looking for Sac-Fox students.



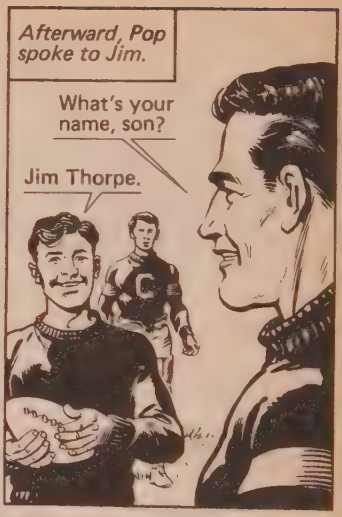
So Jim went back to school. He made the train trip from Oklahoma to Pennsylvania.



It was a strange world for young Jim.
Gosh! How many Indians are here?
Over a thousand!
And he discovered that he was still just a small boy.
Boy, those guys are big!
Wait until I get my chance.
One afternoon, "Pop" Warner, the football coach, gave Jim that chance.
How about it, young fellow? Want to take on the team?
You bet I do!

To start off the day's work, Pop would let one boy try to run past the whole team.
Jim ran like the wind. He pretended he was running through the forest trying to miss the trees. Nobody could stop him.
Hey! This little guy isn't even big enough to make the team!
Once again Pop tossed Jim the ball.
Let's try that again.

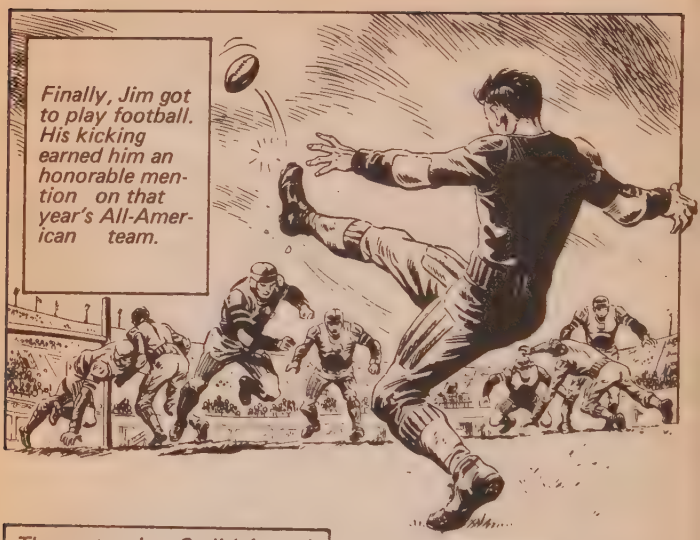
Once again, young Jim ran past everyone.

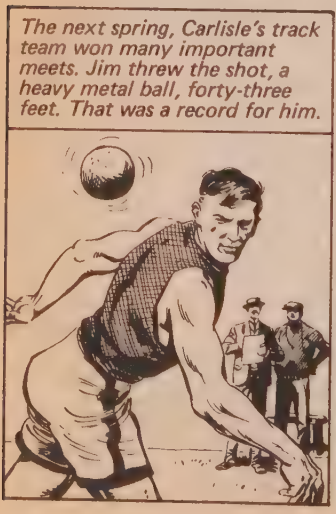

Afterward, Pop spoke to Jim.
What's your name, son?
Jim Thorpe.

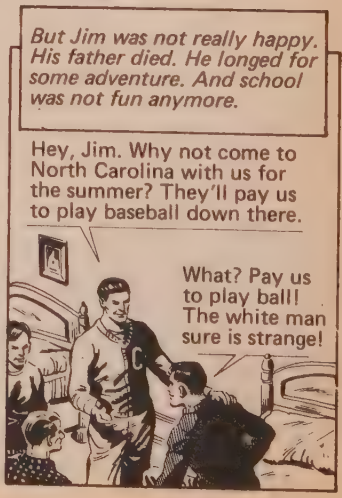
You're a good runner. I want you to report to the track team tomorrow.
But I want to play football.

Oh, you'll play football, but not until you're older and stronger. Don't worry. I've got my eye on you.

Over the next two years Jim was an important star on the school's track team.
Baseball was easy for Jim, too.
Strike three! You're out!
So was dancing.
Oh, Jim, you're a wonderful dance partner.
Jim's schoolwork improved too.
Jim, your grades are getting much better. You've improved more than any other student in your class!


Finally, Jim got to play football. His kicking earned him an honorable mention on that year's All-American team.


The next spring, Carlisle's track team won many important meets. Jim threw the shot, a heavy metal ball, forty-three feet. That was a record for him.

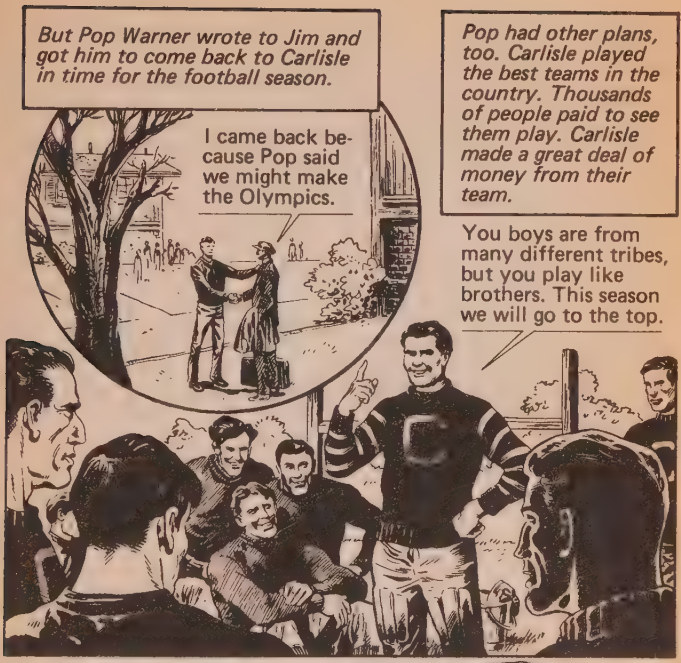

But Jim was not really happy. His father died. He longed for some adventure. And school was not fun anymore.
Hey, Jim. Why not come to North Carolina with us for the summer? They'll pay us to play baseball down there.
What? Pay us to play ball! The white man sure is strange!

Baseball was very popular. Jim played for the Rocky Mount team. He earned fifteen dollars a week.
He became known for his speed. Many times he was safe on first base when anyone else would have been out.
In September, Jim decided not to go back to school.
The football team is going to miss you, Jim.
I know, but I need a break. I miss the old ways, you know.

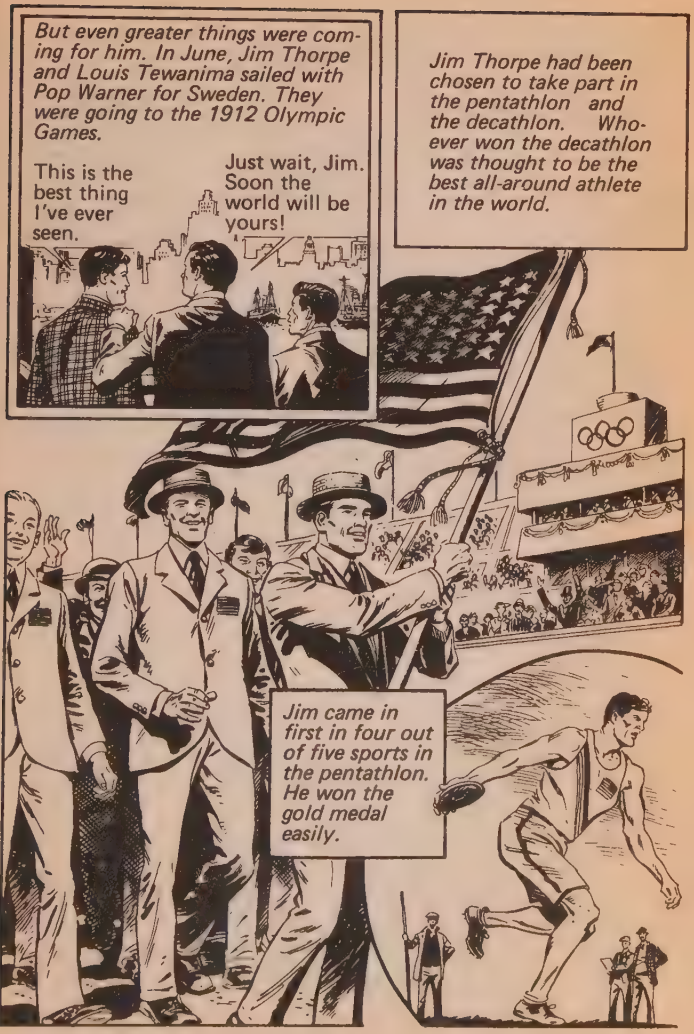
The next summer he played baseball again in North Carolina.

He saw some of his old friends from Carlisle who were also playing baseball.
Why don't you come back to Carlisle?
I feel very bad about leaving the way I did. Besides, they probably won't let me back in.

The 1912 Olympic Games

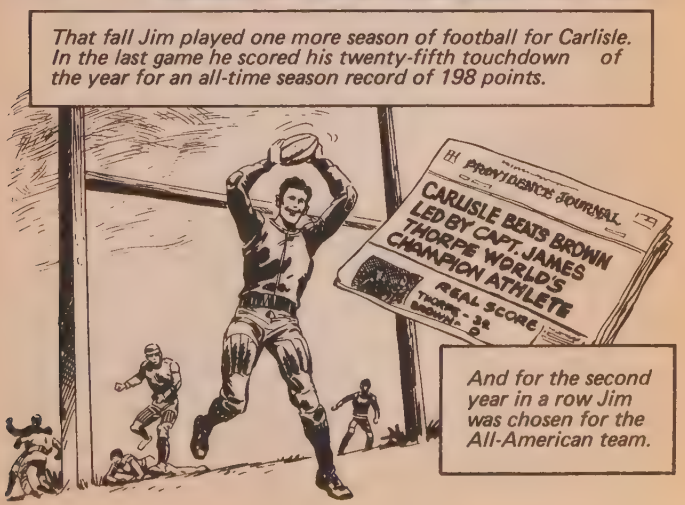

But Pop Warner wrote to Jim and got him to come back to Carlisle in time for the football season.
I came back because Pop said we might make the Olympics.
Pop had other plans, too. Carlisle played the best teams in the country. Thousands of people paid to see them play. Carlisle made a great deal of money from their team.
You boys are from many different tribes, but you play like brothers. This season we will go to the top.
The team made money and traveled first class.
What do you think about all this?
The white man sure is strange.

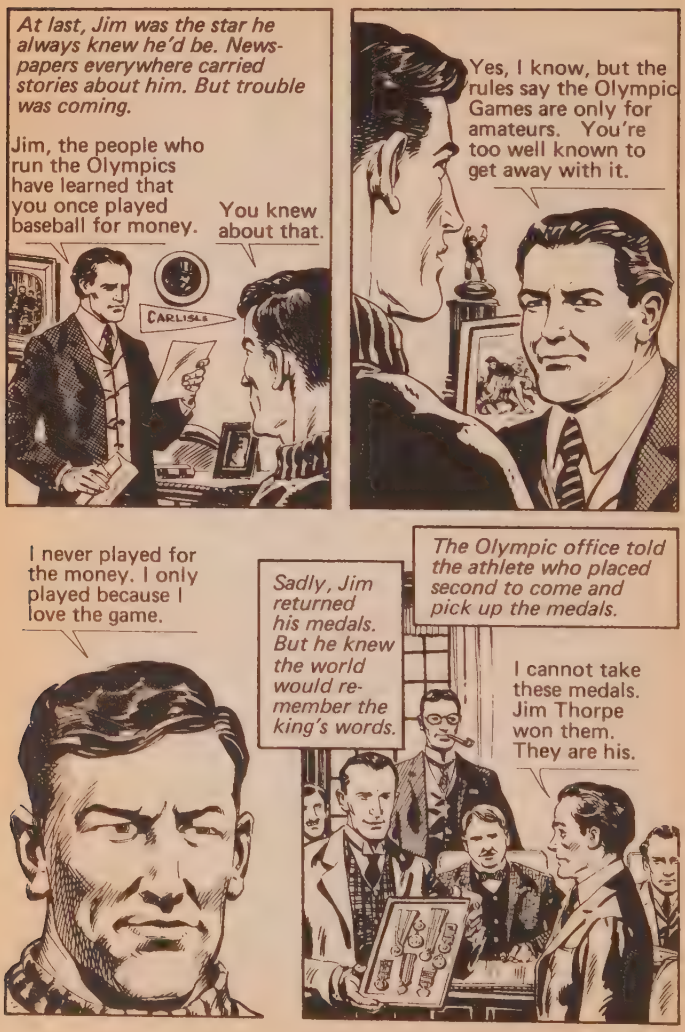
In 1911 the Carlisle football team won nine games in a row. Then they beat Harvard 18-15. Jim scored twelve of Carlisle's points.
Listen to this . . . "Thorpe promises to become the greatest athlete the world has ever seen."
NEW YORK TIMES
REDMEN SKIN HARVARD
Two weeks later, Jim played every minute of a game against a college in Rhode Island. The Carlisle team won easily, and Jim made one kick that went eighty-three yards.
SPORTS
THORPE CHOSEN ALL-AMERICAN HALF BACK


But even greater things were coming for him. In June, Jim Thorpe and Louis Tewanima sailed with Pop Warner for Sweden. They were going to the 1912 Olympic Games.
This is the best thing I've ever seen.
Just wait, Jim. Soon the world will be yours!
Jim Thorpe had been chosen to take part in the pentathlon and the decathlon. Whoever won the decathlon was thought to be the best all-around athlete in the world.
Jim came in first in four out of five sports in the pentathlon. He won the gold medal easily.

Jim won the decathlon, too. His score of 8,142.96 points was a record that would stand for sixteen years.
That year the United States won sixteen gold medals. Two of those were Jim Thorpe's. King Gustav of Sweden presented the medals while the crowd cheered.
Sir, you are the greatest athlete in the world.
Thank you.
Jim would remember the king's words for the rest of his life.

When the team returned home, there was a huge welcome parade in New York City. Jim rode alone in an open car with trophies that the leaders of Sweden and Russia had given him.


That fall Jim played one more season of football for Carlisle. In the last game he scored his twenty-fifth touchdown of the year for an all-time season record of 198 points.
PROVIDENCE JOURNAL
CARLISLE BEATS BROWN LED BY CAPT. JAMES THORPE WORLD'S CHAMPION ATHLETE
REAL SCORE
And for the second year in a row Jim was chosen for the All-American team.


At last, Jim was the star he always knew he'd be. Newspapers everywhere carried stories about him. But trouble was coming.
Jim, the people who run the Olympics have learned that you once played baseball for money.
You knew about that.
CARLISLE
Yes, I know, but the rules say the Olympic Games are only for amateurs. You're too well known to get away with it.
I never played for the money. I only played because I love the game.
Sadly, Jim returned his medals. But he knew the world would remember the king's words.
The Olympic office told the athlete who placed second to come and pick up the medals.
I cannot take these medals. Jim Thorpe won them. They are his.

The Professional Athlete

Later, Jim became a true professional athlete. He played baseball for the New York Giants.
In October, 1913, he married Eva Miller, a girl from Carlisle. They left right away on a trip around the world.
Isn't this interesting?
Well, it's not Oklahoma!
Jim Thorpe also played professional football. He was the star who most helped the sport in its early years.
In September, 1920, he was named president of the American Professional Football League.

Jim Thorpe came far from his childhood in Oklahoma. But he was a simple man who became known by doing what he loved to do. He never understood or learned to accept the world of fame and money. After his days as a professional athlete were over, Jim was happiest with his children . . .
Come on, kids. Let's go fishing.
. . . and his fishing pole.
Like I always said, the white man's world is strange.
Jim Thorpe became a famous athlete partly because of the hard life he had as a child. He became strong in order to stay alive. And today, Jim Thorpe is still remembered as one of the best athletes the United States has ever known.
THE END

Do you remember?

Jim Thorpe first learned about football at school in:

a. Oklahoma. b. Kansas. c. Pennsylvania.

At Carlisle, Jim first joined the track and baseball teams because:

a. he was too young for the football team.
b. the football coach was mean. c. he liked to dance.

While playing football for Carlisle, he was chosen:

a. coach. b. captain.
c. All-American halfback.

In the 1912 Olympic Games, Jim Thorpe represented the United States and won the contest for the best:

a. athlete in the world. b. skier. c. swimmer.

Quiz Yourself

(Answers at end of section)

Words to know

reservation	land that is set aside by the government for Indians to live on
stubborn	not willing to give in
league	a group of teams that play games against each other
improved	got better
popular	liked by many people

Can you use them?

Using the words above, complete the following sentences.

1. A _____ athlete gets a great deal of attention and praise from the fans.
2. If a person feels strongly about something, he is often _____ about changing his mind.
3. Jim Thorpe grew up on an Indian _____ in Oklahoma.
4. The teams that play each other must all be members of the same _____.
5. Jim's schoolwork _____ when he began taking part in sports.

Using pictures

In reading illustrated stories, you will find it helpful to "read" the pictures as well as the words. Look at this picture. It shows one of the five events Jim Thorpe had to win in the pentathlon.

Now look at the picture on page 25 to see what some of the ten events in the decathlon were.

While you are reading

Jim Thorpe did well in every sport he tried. Make a list of all the sports you can find in which Jim Thorpe took part.

How well did you read?

When you have finished reading, answer the following questions.

1. Which of the following schools did Jim Thorpe attend?
(Check the correct *answers.*)

_____ a. North Carolina

_____ b. Haskell

_____ c. Carlisle

_____ d. UCLA

_____ e. U.S. government school

2. Why did Jim Thorpe's father insist that Jim get an education?
(Check the correct answer.)

_____ a. Jim's father hadn't been allowed to go to school.

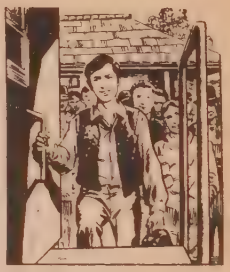
_____ b. Jim was a problem at home.

_____ c. He knew that Indian ways would soon be gone.

_____ d. He was getting old and wanted to retire.

3. What was so unusual about the college Jim attended?

(Check the correct answer.)



___ a. It was a school just for Indians.

___ b. Only the best athletes went there.

___ c. It had no football team.

___ d. It was free.

4. What things did Jim do as a child that helped him become a great athlete?

(Check the correct *answers*.)

___ a. His father taught him to wrestle.

___ b. He studied hard in school.

___ c. He went fishing with his father.

___ d. He ran and played in the woods with his brother.

5. Which of the following jobs did Jim hold after becoming a true professional?

(Check the correct *answers.*)

_____ a. He played professional football.

_____ b. He played baseball for the New York Giants.

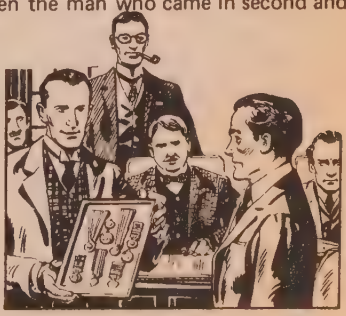
_____ c. He served as head of the Olympic office.

_____ d. He was president of the American Professional Football League.

_____ e. He coached the football team at Carlisle.

Using what you've read

Everyone who knew Jim Thorpe thought he should have kept his Olympic gold medals. Even the man who came in second and was given the medals when Jim lost them thought that Jim should have kept them. What do *you* think? Write a letter to the Olympic Committee telling how you feel.



ANSWER KEY

JIM THORPE

Can you use them?

1. popular
2. stubborn
3. reservation
4. league
5. improved

How well did you read?

1. b, c, e
2. c
3. a
4. a, d
5. a, b, d

NOTES

NOTES

NOTES

NOTES

COMPLETE LIST OF POCKET CLASSICS AVAILABLE

CLASSICS

C 1 Black Beauty
C 2 The Call of the Wild
C 3 Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde
C 4 Dracula
C 5 Frankenstein
C 6 Huckleberry Finn
C 7 Moby Dick
C 8 The Red Badge of Courage
C 9 The Time Machine
C10 Tom Sawyer
C11 Treasure Island
C12 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea
C13 The Great Adventures of Sherlock Holmes
C14 Gulliver's Travels
C15 The Hunchback of Notre Dame
C16 The Invisible Man
C17 Journey to the Center of the Earth
C18 Kidnapped
C19 The Mysterious Island
C20 The Scarlet Letter
C21 The Story of My Life
C22 A Tale of Two Cities
C23 The Three Musketeers
C24 The War of the Worlds
C25 Around the World in Eighty Days
C26 Captains Courageous
C27 A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court
C28 The Hound of the Baskervilles
C29 The House of the Seven Gables
C30 Jane Eyre

COMPLETE LIST OF POCKET CLASSICS AVAILABLE (cont'd)

C31 The Last of the Mohicans
C32 The Best of O. Henry
C33 The Best of Poe
C34 Two Years Before the Mast
C35 White Fang
C36 Wuthering Heights
C37 Ben Hur
C38 A Christmas Carol
C39 The Food of the Gods
C40 Ivanhoe
C41 The Man in the Iron Mask
C42 The Prince and the Pauper
C43 The Prisoner of Zenda
C44 The Return of the Native
C45 Robinson Crusoe
C46 The Scarlet Pimpernel
C47 The Sea Wolf
C48 The Swiss Family Robinson
C49 Billy Budd
C50 Crime and Punishment
C51 Don Quixote
C52 Great Expectations
C53 Heidi
C54 The Illiad
C55 Lord Jim
C56 The Mutiny on Board H.M.S. Bounty
C57 The Odyssey
C58 Oliver Twist
C59 Pride and Prejudice
C60 The Turn of the Screw

COMPLETE LIST OF POCKET CLASSICS AVAILABLE (cont'd)

SHAKESPEARE

S 1 As You Like It
S 2 Hamlet
S 3 Julius Caesar
S 4 King Lear
S 5 Macbeth
S 6 The Merchant of Venice
S 7 A Midsummer Night's Dream
S 8 Othello
S 9 Romeo and Juliet
S10 The Taming of the Shrew
S11 The Tempest
S12 Twelfth Night

COMPLETE LIST OF POCKET CLASSICS AVAILABLE (cont'd)

BIOGRAPHIES

B 1 Charles Lindbergh
B 2 Amelia Earhart
B 3 Houdini
B 4 Walt Disney
B 5 Davy Crockett
B 6 Daniel Boone
B 7 Elvis Presley
B 8 The Beatles
B 9 Benjamin Franklin
B10 Martin Luther King, Jr.
B11 Abraham Lincoln
B12 Franklin D. Roosevelt
B13 George Washington
B14 Thomas Jefferson
B15 Madame Curie
B16 Albert Einstein
B17 Thomas Edison
B18 Alexander Graham Bell
B19 Vince Lombardi
B20 Pelé
B21 Babe Ruth
B22 Jackie Robinson
B23 Jim Thorpe
B24 Althea Gibson

Jim Thorpe

The lives of well-known men and women have influenced and shaped our history. In the Pocket Biographies, we meet many of these people whose contributions to science, government, medicine, sports and entertainment have deeply affected all of us. Their achievements support the famous statement of Thomas Carlyle: "Biography is the only history."

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